



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY HUMAN RESOURCES COMMAND
200 STOVALL STREET
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AHRC-PDO-IP


23 February 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: The Army Voting Assistance Program Instructions

1. As the Army Senior Service Voting Representative, I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to each of you for performing the very important duty as the MACOM Senior Voting Assistance Officer (VAO). I also want to provide instructions for this year's program that includes required reporting timeliness. We all understand that command support is absolutely imperative for the success of this program. Our Soldiers deserve our assistance in executing this very important privilege they receive as American citizens.
2. The next Federal election is on 7 November 2006. However, state and local elections are continually occurring and our Soldiers deserve the opportunity to participate. Additionally, it is essential to sustain your voting assistance efforts and not wait until the last minute to publicize or distribute critical information and Voting Assistance Program timelines.
3. The goal is for 100 percent of our Soldiers be contacted concerning voting, especially information on the absentee voting process. Each Soldier should know his or her appointed Unit VAO. Our responsibility as leaders is to ensure every Soldier is contacted and offered information about voting.
4. The Federal Voting Assistance Program Office started to provide VAO Training Workshops. Each VAO must receive training and the Workshop is the ideal place. MACOM Voting POCs and the Army Voting Action Officer have the schedule. Please ensure your Installation Senior VAOs and Unit VAO attend this critical training.
5. I appreciate your continued command emphasis on this very important program. My POC is Mr. James Davis, the Army Voting Action Officer, at (703) 325-4530 or DSN 221-4530; e-mail address is davisj@hoffman.army.mil. **Responsibility Has No Borders. Vote!**

Encl
As


E. ERIC PORTER
Brigadier General, USA
The Adjutant General

IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE ARMY VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (2006-2007)

1. Purpose:

These instructions implement the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), DoD Directive 1000.4 and provide information necessary for the conduct of the Army Voting Assistance Program (AR 608-20) during the 2006/2007 election years. The program's principal purposes are to make registration and voting information, materials, and assistance readily available to all eligible Army voters and provide them every opportunity and encouragement to register and vote in Federal, State and Local elections.

2. References:

a. Publications:

- (1) AR 608-20, Army Voting Assistance Program, 28 Oct 04.
- (2) Voting Assistance Guide – 2006-2007 (Misc. Pub 360-02).
- (3) DoD Directive 1000.4, Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), 14 Apr 04.
- (4) DoD Directive 1344.10, Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty, 2 Aug 04.
- (5) 5 C.F.R. Part 734, Political Activities of Federal Employees.
- (6) DoD 5500.7-R, Joint Ethics Regulation, Chapter 6, Section 2, Paragraphs 6-200–6-205, Political Activities of Civilian DoD Employees, 30 Aug 93 .
- (7) AR 360-1, The Army Public Affairs Program, 15 Sep 00.
- (8) AR 600-20, Army Command Policy, 13 May 02.
- (9) Sections 608 and 609 of Title 18, United States Code.

b. Forms:

- (1) Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA).
- (2) Standard Form 186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

3. Concept:

- a. There are two basic missions associated with the Army Voting Assistance Program:

(1) The first mission, and primary focus of the program, is the traditional voting assistance provided to Soldiers, their family members, and overseas DA civilian employees and their family members. Individual voting assistance consists of unit Voting Assistance Officers (VAOs) providing technical guidance. Further assistance may be obtained by using the installation's chain of command: Unit VAOs, installation Senior Voting Assistance Officers (SVAOs), MACOM SVAOs, Army Voting Action Officer, the Army's Senior Service Voting Representative, and finally the Federal Voting Assistance Program, DoD.

(2) The second mission is to educate every Soldier about the importance and value of voting and the notify them of the opportunities they have to participate in the voting franchise, if they so desire.

b. Direct command involvement is required in order to meet these mission objectives and to ensure they are accomplished within the limits of law and policy.

4. Prohibited Practices:

The primary goal of the Army Voting Assistance Program is to actively encourage and assist Soldiers, as well as other eligible individuals, to register and vote without violating statute or regulation. The prohibitions below and in the references above must be strictly adhered to in order to meet this goal. Assistance in applying these guidelines while implementing the Voting Assistance Program may be obtained from your servicing Staff Judge Advocate's Office.

a. The use of lists to keep specific account of Soldiers' decisions regarding registration and voting is prohibited. The only reporting that this program requires is the number of Soldiers who participate in the voter assistance program – regardless of whether they choose to register or vote later. Therefore, by-name accounting is not necessary and will not be recorded.

b. Installation Commanders will not permit the use of installation facilities by any candidate (either incumbents or new office seekers) or members of their staffs and campaign representatives for: political assemblies or meetings; media events; fund-raising dinners; parties or social events; causes, no matter who is the sponsor; press conferences; or similar activities. If a current government official who is also a candidate is visiting the installation for official reasons, Installation Commanders must coordinate with the local PAO for guidance when planning the visit.

c. Installation Commanders will decline requests for support to any political event which may imply association with any partisan group.

d. Unit VAOs will not engage in or support any activities that could be interpreted as associating the Department of the Army with any political causes or candidates.

e. Commissioned, Warrant, and Noncommissioned Officers of the Armed Forces shall not use military authority to influence or attempt to influence any other member to vote or not to vote, or to require any member to march to any polling place or place of voting. Such

activity violates the criminal laws of the United States. This does not prohibit individuals in their personal capacities from discussing political issues or the candidates for public office; however, leaders must be cautious not to display undue influence over subordinates, even during informal conversations. For additional guidance on this issue, contact your servicing Staff Judge Advocate office.

f. Unit VAOs must be aware that the types of voting literature that may be distributed is very limited:

(1) DoD policy prohibits Active Duty personnel from distributing **ANY** campaign literature, whether you consider it partisan or not. Active Duty personnel will only distribute information relating to the process of registering to vote; i.e., "Voting Assistance Guide," FPCA, and FWAB.

(2) Neither DoD nor DA is authorized to collect or distribute voting information of a partisan nature. Soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their eligible family members **MUST** obtain this type of information from other sources. Much of this information may be obtained from the DoD Voting Information Center (DOD VIC). Soldiers and DA civilians overseas are encouraged to call the DOD VIC at 1-800-438-VOTE (8683), (703) 588-1343 or DSN 425-1343. Toll free telephone numbers are listed by country on the Federal Voting Assistance Program web site at www.fvap.gov.

g. Voting Assistance Officers will NOT contact State and local officials or agencies about voting matters. They should contact the FVAP office for assistance if it is necessary to contact State or local offices. The FVAP office is the sole DoD representative for obtaining and distributing voting information from these officials.

h. Active duty Soldiers and Reserve component Soldiers on active duty are required to adhere to the policies in DoD Directive 1344.10 and AR 600-20. Department of the Army civilian employees must comply with the limitations on political activity in 5 C.F.R. Part 734 and JER, Chapter 6.

5. Responsibilities:

a. United States Army Human Resources Command (AHRC):

(1) The Adjutant General, AHRC, is designated as the Senior Army Voting Representative to manage the Army's Voting Assistance Program. The Senior Army Voting Representative will appoint an Army Voting Action Officer, preferably a GS-12 or higher, to administer the Voting Program.

(2) The Adjutant General Directorate, AHRC, implements the Army Voting Assistance Program and serves as the Voting Program Coordinator for Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA). The telephone number of the Voting Action Line is DSN 221-4530 or commercial (703) 325-4530. The facsimile number DSN 221-4532 or commercial (703) 325-4532.

(3) The Army Voting Action Officer will coordinate with the Army Reserve Command and the National Guard Bureau to ensure each Reserve component maintains a contingency absentee voting program for the National Guard and reserve units and for personnel who have been activated and deployed. Each Reserve component shall designate a Senior Voting Assistance Officer at its Headquarters level and ensure a unit VAO is appointed within each activated unit. Provide the name of the SVAO and quarterly updates as required in paragraph 5b(3) below.

b. Major Army Commanders will:

(1) Appoint, in writing, a senior officer (Colonel or above or a civilian equivalent) as the Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO) to manage the major Army command's (MACOM) Voting Assistance Program. The MACOM SVAO must attend a FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop during election years for Federal offices.

(2) Ensure that an Installation Senior Voting Assistance Officer is appointed at each installation along with an alternate (military or civilian) to manage the overall installation program. The designated grade of the installation senior voting assistance officer (GS-12 or higher or Major or higher) is directed in the DoD Directive 1000.4 Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP). MACOM Commanders should ensure that the SVAO coordinates with their servicing Staff Judge Advocate so that the conduct of the voting assistance program remains within the limits of law and policy.

(3) Ensure the MACOM SVAOs maintain a listing of all subordinate installation SVAOs and their designated alternates. The following information will be included in the updated listing of SVAOs: Grade or title, name, address (mailing and e-mail), telephone number (commercial and DSN), facsimile number (commercial and DSN), and date attended FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop. The list must be updated quarterly and submitted to arrive at AHRC NLT 14 Apr 06, 14 Jul 06, and 6 Oct 06. The list must be e-mailed to davisj@hoffman.army.mil.

(4) Monitor subordinate installation's voting assistance programs throughout the election year and provide monthly status reports for the period May 06 through Sep 06. These reports should be in narrative format and should contain examples of events planned and held at installations to publicize the importance of the voting franchise and opportunities for voters to register (be sure to address events planned for and the overall success of the Army Voter Registration Month scheduled for Aug and Armed Forces Voters Week in Sep 06); report any problem areas that may affect the Voting Assistance effort, and report Best Practices and Lessons not previously reported. Additionally, please include the percent of service members who have received the training required in paragraph 5d(6) below. Remember the goals are 100% contact and trained, but keeping lists of Soldiers regarding their decisions to register or vote is prohibited and unnecessary for the reports required by this program. See paragraph 4a above. The first monthly report is due 9 Jun 06 and subsequent monthly reports are due 14 Jul 06, 11 Aug 06, 8 Sep 06 and 6 Oct 06. These reports will be sent to AHRC, ATTN: AHRC-PDO-IP, Alexandria, VA 22332-0474. The reports may be faxed to (703) 325-4532 or e-mailed to davisj@hoffman.army.mil. **Separate reports will be required on the number of Soldiers**

currently assigned, the number of Soldiers who have been contacted and offered the FPCA, and the status of VAO appointments and training. Separate instructions and formatted spreadsheets will be provided for these reports at a later date.

(5) Ensure each Soldier is provided FPCAs for themselves and their voting age family members before graduation from recruit training (CDR, TRADOC).

(6) Establish within the MACOM a Voting Assistance Officer network and communications capability to quickly disseminate voting information through the MACOM.

(7) Ensure the accomplishment of the IN-HAND delivery of FPCAs required in paragraph 7a(2).

c. Installation Commanders will:

(1) Ensure that the voting assistance program is conducted within the legal limits discussed in paragraph 4 of these instructions, as well as the limits imposed by the referenced publications. Commanders will ensure that their Senior Voting Assistance Officer coordinates closely with their servicing Staff Judge Advocate throughout the conduct of the program.

(2) Appoint, in writing, an Installation Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO) to manage the installation's voting assistance program throughout the election year. Where possible, the Installation SVAO should be a DA civilian GS-12 or higher. If a military member is appointed as the Installation SVAO, that officer should hold the grade of MAJ or higher. An alternate SVAO should also be appointed. If the installation has no GS-12, or Major or above other than the assigned commander, then the next most senior officer, noncommissioned officer or civilian shall be appointed as the SVAO. All installation SVAO's must attend the Federal Voting Assistance Program training within 90-days of appointment. Installation SVAOs and VAOs should arrange to attend one of the workshops, utilizing the "Train the Trainer" type concept. At the completion of the workshop, the SVAOs and VAOs who attend will have the tools required to train the VAOs at their respective installation(s) who were unable to attend this session. The SVAO is the principal assistant to the Installation Commander and is responsible to the Commander to:

(a) Ensure Unit VAOs are trained to provide assistance to all Army voters including family members, and DA civilian employees and their family members overseas.

(b) Advise all CONUS SVAOs to follow their normal support supply channels to obtain their blank forms from the U.S. Army Publications Distribution Operations Facility located at the address as follows: U.S. Army Publications Distribution Operations Facility, 1655 Woodson Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63114-6181. At a minimum, each VAO must have:

1. A copy of the Voting Assistance Guide (2006/2007).
2. Four FPCAs for each assigned Soldier and DA civilian stationed OCONUS.

3. One FWAB for each assigned Soldier and for each DA civilian stationed OCONUS.

4. Other promotional materials as required (see Appendix A).

(c) Ensure an installation voting assistance plan is established which reflects the guidance contained in these implementing instructions and that planning is accomplished on the installation to conduct, through the chain of command, the Army Voter Registration Month in August 2006.

(d) Evaluate the effectiveness of the installation voting assistance program on a continual basis.

(e) Ensure periodic status reports on planning efforts, successes, problems, and recommendations are submitted to their MACOM SVAOs to meet the requirements in paragraph 5b(4) above.

(3) Require that unit VAOs (First Lieutenant/Sergeant First Class or above) are appointed, in writing, and that they attend the Federal Voting Assistance Program training within 90-days of appointment. Voting Assistance Officers must have retention in the unit through December 2006. Maintain a current listing of all unit VAOs.

(4) Ensure copies of FPCA are included in orientation packets for new and permanent change of station personnel.

(5) Evaluate the command's voting assistance programs on a continual basis.

(6) Conduct the Army Voter Registration Month in August 2006. All Soldiers will be briefed on their right to vote and will be given every opportunity and encouragement to exercise that right consistent with the limitations listed in paragraph 4 of this guidance and in accordance with other policies and laws. Soldiers should receive at least one briefing or training session devoted to absentee registration and voting. The availability of voting information, supporting materials, personal assistance and the importance of the voting franchise will be stressed. Remember that keeping lists of Soldiers and recording their decisions regarding registering to vote and voting is prohibited and is unnecessary for this requirement.

(8) Emphasize the week of 3-9 Sep 06 as "Armed Forces Voters Week." This week should be used by commanders and unit VAOs to assist those who were not registered earlier in August and should be the culmination of the formal registration effort.

(9) Designate other days to emphasize voting registration and the importance of voting. Recommend a day around 4 July 2006 and other appropriate holidays.

(10) Emphasize the week of 8-14 Oct 06 as "Absentee Voters Week" to encourage the completion and the mailing of absentee ballots prior to the General election. Absentee

voters outside the U.S. should submit a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot during this week if they have not received their absentee ballot from their State.

(11) Ensure that installation telephone operators are provided the names, office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of the installation SVAOs and all unit VAOs.

(12) Ensure that installation Public Affairs Officers coordinate voting information support materials through the Army Public Affairs channels.

(13) Ensure that The Adjutant General Directorate, AHRC, is notified immediately whenever a voter is denied the opportunity to vote in any State. The telephone number is (703) 325-4530 or DSN 221-4530 or email to davisj@hoffman.army.mil.

(14) Ensure that SVAOs specifically coordinate the services of the public affairs officer, Staff Judge Advocate, publications account manager, and communication and message centers to facilitate the opportunity to register and vote. See Appendix A for Voting Assistance Publications.

(15) Ensure that nonpartisan offers to assist in the installation's voting assistance program from on-post private organizations such as Family Readiness Groups, Boy/Girl Scouts and other youth groups, veteran's organizations, and service associations are accepted, when appropriate, and integrated into the installation's voting assistance program. These offers MUST BE coordinated with the servicing Staff Judge Advocate before acceptance to ensure that the offer complies with all provisions of law and policy.

(16) Designate at least one well-advertised fixed location on the installation where absentee voting materials and assistance are available to all military personnel, civilian employees and their family members. Locations may include legal assistance offices, family service centers, community centers, etc.

(17) Ensure voting assistance is provided to members of the Army National Guard and the Reserves in the event they are activated and serving within their subordinate commands whether in CONUS or OCONUS and to small and/or geographically separated units, rear detachments, Family Readiness/Support Groups, etc.

(18) Each Installation SVAO will provide notification to Unit VAO's and eligible absentee voters on the installation of the last date before a general Federal election by which absentee ballots must be mailed from that installation to reasonably be delivered in time to State and local election officials. Absentee ballots should be mailed NLT 14 days prior to the election if mailed in CONUS and NLT 14-30 days prior to the election if mailed from OCONUS.

(19) Establish an installation VAO network to quickly disseminate voting information throughout the installation.

d. Unit commanders down to company and detachment level will:

(1) Appoint, in writing, unit VAOs in the grades of First Lieutenant/Sergeant First Class or above in all units with 25 or more permanently assigned members. As a minimum and maximum span of control for VAOs must be established. An additional VAO should be appointed, in writing, for each 50 unit members above the 25 member base. When military personnel (including noncommissioned officers) are designated as voting assistance officers, they are authorized by DoD Directive 1000.4 to administer oaths in connection with voting registration and voting.

(2) Provide unit VAOs the necessary time and resources needed to perform their voting assistance duties.

(3) Provide Soldiers who desire to vote the maximum opportunity to do so. This occurs through junior officers and senior NCOs assisting their respective subordinates with their voting questions and problems throughout the election year. Remember, it is **ILLEGAL** for Commissioned, Warrant, and Noncommissioned Officers to use military authority to influence anyone to vote or not to vote. Leaders at all levels must understand that the DoD goal is to eliminate problems/barriers that might prevent someone from voting and to provide every opportunity for Soldiers to register and vote if they so desire. The goal is NOT to pressure, cajole, or order Soldiers to register or to vote. Doing so not only violates DoD and Army policy, but violates the criminal laws of the United States.

(4) Encourage and assist Soldiers who are interested in registering to vote to do so as soon as possible. Authorize use to "priority" precedence when using DSN for voting assistance and allow access to command fax machines for transmission of election materials when it does not interfere with mission accomplishment.

(5) Ensure the unit members and their voting-age dependents have ready access to absentee voter registration, ballot requests and absentee submission information and deadlines. Additionally, any person appearing to need assistance in reading or understanding English language material should receive immediate assistance in the appropriate language.

(6) Train all Soldiers (including activated National Guard and Reserve component personnel) on absentee registration and voting procedures during years of elections for Federal offices. All basic training and command courses shall include voting training and will advertise voting assistance programs to encourage junior Service members to register and subsequently vote and include instructions on voting rights and responsibilities and procedures on absentee registration and voting. Provide training and voting assistance for units preparing for deployment where voting materials and accessibility to register may be limited. Train all Reserve component personnel during years of elections for Federal offices on all aspects of the voting program, to include familiarity with the FPCA and FWAB.

(7) Remind Soldiers to send in a new FPCA whenever their mailing address changes and for those Soldiers who have filed an FPCA and subsequently are released from the Army, to inform their local election officials so that an absentee ballot is not mailed, if they desire to vote in person.

e. The MACOM and Installation Commanders are responsible for providing an active command information program concerning voting. They will:

(1) Ensure clear channels of communications are established throughout the installation to expedite voting information down to unit level.

(2) Direct internal information media to publicize all aspects of the 2006/2007 voting information program in a timely and effective manner (see Appendix B).

f. The SVAOs and VAOs are responsible to their commanders for coordinating all matters pertaining to the Army Voting Assistance Program at their respective level. Continuity folders must be maintained by each VAO containing any and all references leading to a successful voting assistance program.

g. Commanders at all levels will provide command emphasis and support to the Army Voting Assistance Program on a consistent and continuing basis and rate Voting Assistance Officers on the way they perform their voting assistance duties. Commanders shall establish the evaluation criteria for Voting Assistance Officer performance within their command.

6. Army Voter Registration Month (August 2006):

The Army Voter Registration Month will be the primary time to provide focus on the mission to educate Soldiers and to assist those who desire/need assistance in requesting their State ballots.

a. During August, commanders and their VAOs must ensure that all Soldiers have been given the opportunity to register and request a ballot from their State election officials. If the Soldier desires to register, they must do so in person or by using an FPCA. Information for executing the FPCA, in all States and territories or possessions of the U.S., is found in the Voting Assistance Guide 2006-2007.

b. Program Structure. The Army Voting Assistance Plan divides the voting cycle into four distinct phases. These phases are outlined in detail in paragraph 7.

7. Coordinating Instructions:

The following instructions are phased to coincide with major events throughout the election cycle. It serves as a guide to be adapted and amplified as local circumstances dictate.

a. Phase I (November 2005 - Spring 2006):

(1) Appoint installation SVAOs and unit VAOs to serve throughout the General election of 2006. Ensure that all VAOs receive FVAP training and training regarding the legal and policy limits on political activities of uniformed service members and civilian employees. Servicing Staff Judge Advocates should be used to the maximum extent possible to provide this training.

(2) Commanders must ensure IN-HAND delivery of FPCA to all uniformed absentee voters (for them and their voting age family members) NLT 15 January of each year. This requires the unit VAOs to place the FPCAs in the hands of Soldiers. This can be accomplished in unit formations or during scheduled unit training. Voting Assistance Officers, Commanders, and other leaders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this delivery is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the limitations in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to Soldiers who want them, not to coerce Soldiers to use the forms.

(3) Order all voting materials as specified in Appendix A.

(4) Provide installation telephone operators with a directory containing the names, office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of all unit VAOs on the installation and to ensure it is continuously updated.

(5) Commanders should review their command's voting assistance programs to ensure that the Army Voting Assistance Program is implemented as specified throughout these instructions.

(6) Commanders should begin their command's information programs about primary elections as directed by DOD and Army leadership. These information efforts should be repeated, as necessary, to inform and educate Soldiers and their family members to exercise their right to vote in primaries and general elections. Family members will be encouraged to participate in these programs.

(7) Commanders should encourage access to the Army Voting Assistance Program Webpage (<https://www.hrc.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>) and FVAP Web Site (www.fvap.gov) for voting information. If World Wide Web access is not available, ensure distribution of allowable voting information (see paragraph 4 of this policy for limitations) which is available prior to publication and distribution of the *2006 - 2007 Voting Assistance Guide* and any changes thereto.

(8) Inspectors General of the Military Services are required to review the voting assistance program annually at every level of command to ensure compliance with DoD regulations and public law and submit their reports to the DoD Inspector General by 31 January of the following year.

b. Phase II (January - October 2006):

(1) Voting Assistance Officers must attend a FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop.

(2) Concentrate efforts to provide absentee registration and voting assistance to Soldiers for State primary elections (January - October 2006).

(3) Order one FWAB per Soldier, their eligible family members and DA civilians in overseas areas. The FWAB may be used only under the conditions specified in the Voting Assistance Guide – 2006-2007 or by the individual States.

(4) Conduct the Army Voter Registration Month during August 2006. Installation commanders should make the FPCA available through schools, reception battalions, and in-processing stations.

(5) Commanders must ensure FPCAs are available to all Soldiers (for them and their voting age family members) who are serving outside the territorial limits of the United States NLT 15 August 2006. This must be accomplished NLT 15 August of even numbered years. This can be accomplished in unit formations or during scheduled unit training. Commanders, VAOs, and other leaders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this delivery is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the limitations in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to Soldiers who want them, not to coerce Soldiers to use the forms.

(6) Emphasize "Armed Forces Voters Week" (week of 3-9 Sep 06) and "Absentee Voters Week" (week of 8-14 Oct 06). Designate other special days to emphasize voting registration and the importance of voting, i.e. in July and September. Develop programs to support the objective of creating awareness of the process and requirements for Soldiers to register to participate in the general election. Publicize the importance of early action on the part of voters to obtain a ballot for the general election well in advance of election deadlines.

(7) Continue dissemination of information about the Voting Assistance Program throughout your installation.

c. Phase III (August 2006 - 7 November 2006):

(1) Continue to widely disseminate voting information to include schools, hospitals, reception battalions, and in-processing stations.

(2) Commanders must ensure FPCAs are available to all Soldiers (for them and their voting age family members) who are serving in the United States NLT 15 Sep 06. This must be accomplished NLT 15 September of even numbered years. This can be accomplished in unit formations or during scheduled unit training. VAOs and commanders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the guidance in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to Soldiers who might want them, NOT to coerce Soldiers to use the forms.

(3) Unit VAOs should advise absentee voters serving in the United States that their absentee ballot must be mailed a minimum of 14-days prior to the ballot return deadline set by their State. Absentee voters outside the United States must mail their ballots a minimum of 14-30-days prior to the ballot return deadline set by their State.

(4) Unit VAOs should know how and when to use the SF 186 (FWAB) and recommend its use if the voter meets the criteria and does not receive the regular absentee ballot in sufficient time to vote and return it to be counted by the State election officials.

d. Phase IV (8 November 2006 - 31 December 2006):

(1) Assist, as requested, with post-election surveys of unit VAOs. The survey's findings will be used in formulating plans for future voting assistance programs and as a part of the Report on the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

(2) Provide an after-action report in the format specified by DoD.

8. Administration:

a. Voting Action Line. Senior installation and MACOM VAOs who encounter difficulties in preparing and carrying out their voting assistance programs may address problems or questions to the VAO by calling the Voting Action Line at DSN 221-4530 or commercial (703) 325-4530. Installation and MACOM VAOs will establish and publicize the availability of a special telephone service, the "Voting Action Line," to provide rapid response to voting problems as they arise within their commands. The Department of the Army's "Voting Action Line" is now operational to receive questions from 0730-1600 Eastern Time. After duty hours a voice mail system is available to record questions. A response will be provided as soon as possible.

b. In-Hand Delivery of FPCA. In-hand delivery of the FPCA is required as indicated in paragraph 7a(2) above. The FPCA should be readily available to DA civilians and their eligible family members outside the territorial limits of the United States. Installation SVAOs must ensure that unit VAOs develop plans to assure that at least one FPCA is personally handed to each eligible Soldier on the installation. Soldiers should also be given a FPCA for each of their eligible family members. The FPCA should be handed to Soldiers on TDY or leave upon their return to their active unit. Voting Assistance Officers and Commanders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the guidance in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to Soldiers who want them, NOT to coerce Soldiers to use the forms.

c. Legal Assistance. The SVAOs and unit VAOs should develop a working relationship with the installation or activity legal assistance office for help in determining legal residence for those voters who request such assistance. The Voting Assistance Guide 2006-2007, contains the required state information about residency, but rules are often complex or vague and vary widely from State to State. Legal assistance officers are often best able to provide advice on the more difficult residency questions which arise.

d. Electronic Transmission of Election Materials. Often, transmitting voting materials by mail prevents timely receipt and return of materials. When such conditions exist, possibly preventing an individual from voting, electronic transmission may be possible. At Appendix B of the Voting Assistance Guide, 2006-2007, are complete details on the possibilities of using this method which is allowed by certain States.

Appendix A

Essential Voting Materials (2006-2007)

A-1. Voting Assistance Guide 2006-2007

1. The Voting Assistance Guide 2006-2007 (Misc Pub 360-02) is the basic reference document of the Federal Voting Assistance Program and provides all voting assistance officers with necessary information to give potential voters the following assistance:

a. Explanation of current procedures for absentee registration and voting in each State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

b. Absentee registration and voting deadlines established by the States, territories, and other jurisdictions, along with dates of primary and general elections.

c. Addresses, including county seats and ZIP codes of election officials in each State, territory, and other jurisdictions.

2. The SVAOs should encourage access to the Army Voting Assistance Program Webpage (<https://www.hrc.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>) and FVAP Web Site (www.fvap.gov) for voting information. If World Wide Web access is not available, ensure distribution of allowable voting information (see paragraph 4 of this policy for limitations) which is available prior to publication and distribution of the Voting Assistance Guide – 2004-2005 and any changes thereto.

A-2. Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

The FPCA, a postage-free form, is authorized by law for use by all eligible active duty Soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their family members. Because there are differences in the treatment accorded to the FPCA by various States and other jurisdictions, the Voting Assistance Guide - 2006/2007 should be consulted to determine how each particular jurisdiction authorizes use of the FPCA by absentee voters. The installation SVAO should ensure that the publications account manager has an adequate inventory of the FPCAs on hand, or on order.

A-3. Standard Form 186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

a. The FWAB (SF 186) is authorized by law and may be used in general elections for Federal office by voters who make timely application for, and do not receive, regular absentee ballots.

b. Those who wish to use the FWAB must have met the following criteria:

(1) The application of a voter for a regular absentee ballot must have been received by the local election official at least 30 days before the general election.

(2) The FWAB may be submitted from all locations. Check Misc Pub 360-02 for details.

(3) The FWAB must be received by the local election official no later than the deadline for receipt of regular absentee ballots under state law.

c. All installations should stock a sufficient supply of these ballots for use by voters as outlined above.

A-4. Other voting information materials

a. Posters. DoD voting posters are available for requisitioning as indicted below.

b. Public Service Announcements will be available for voting assistance officers to educate Soldiers about the processes they need to follow if they want to participate during the 2006 general election. Their availability will be announced prior to their distribution to installation SVAOs.

A-5. Ordering Voting Materials

a. Voting Materials can only be ordered at this website: www.apd.army.mil. Instructions for ordering from USAREUR are in paragraph c below. The correct nomenclature for each item plus the correct U/I:

- Voting Assistance Guide (Misc. Pub 360-02) - Ea.

- Motivational Poster - DOD P-111 - It's Your Future - Ea

- Motivational Poster - DOD P-112 - Responsibility Has No Borders - Ea.

- 2006 State Primary Election Calendar - Ea.

- Registration and Absentee Ballot Request - Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) SF 76 - Ea.

- Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) SF 186 - Ea.

b. The customer service number for the Publications Distribution Operations Facility-St. Louis is (314) 592-0910 or DSN 892-0910.

c. Voting materials ordered from the USAREUR Publications Office must be ordered from: <https://aepubs.army.mil> using the nomenclatures above. The point of contact numbers are DSN 314-384-6881/6882/6883/6884.

Appendix B

Information Support Plan (2006-2007)

B-1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to focus Commanders, Personnel Officers (G-1s/S-1s)), and Voting Assistance Officers' (VAO) efforts in providing voting assistance to Soldiers, overseas DA civilians (to include NAF civilians and Retirees overseas), and their family members for the 2006 general elections.

B-2. Scope

This plan applies to MACOM and Installation Public Affairs Officers.

B-3. Applicability

- a. This plan should be aimed at all Soldiers, but primarily first time voters and those using the absentee voting process for the first time and their family members.
- b. MACOM and installation VAOs will build upon this plan to produce their educational and promotional materials.

B-4. Situation

- a. This is a general election year. In 2006, 33 U.S. Senators, 435 members of the House of Representatives, 37 State Governors, and thousands of State and local officials will be elected.
- b. We must communicate to our Soldiers the importance of voting and the process they must follow if they desire to participate in the general election including the primaries throughout the 2006 election year.
- c. The number one voter slogan for the 2006 general election year is: Responsibility Has No Borders. Vote! This slogan, in addition to other slogans found on the front page of Misc. Pub 360-02 and throughout the pamphlet, should be used during the 2006 elections to encourage and motivate the Army's target market voters.
- d. The Armed Forces Information Service (AFIS) will likely conduct specialized, multimedia activities emphasizing registration for voting in primary and general elections for the entire Army. In addition to distributing news releases and related features, the Armed Forces Radio Television Service (AFRTS) may broadcast voting spot announcements and features. Army News Service (ARNEWS) will disseminate articles to newspapers worldwide. Soldiers Radio and Television (SRTV) Service will also be

Involved in disseminating radio and television products worldwide. Soldiers Magazine will provide information regarding voting to commanders for their use in educating Soldiers about the process to follow to register and vote.

e. The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Office will prepare releases to alert voters of special election dates.

f. The FVAP will prepare voting information on State and local primary elections and continue operation of the Voting Information Center (VIC). The VIC provides a 24-hour recorded service with news and information on elections, candidates and issues. Anyone may call the VIC on 1-800-VOTE (8683), (703) 588-1343, DSN 425-1343 or any of the toll-free numbers found in the Voting Assistance Guide Misc. Pub 360-02, or under the FVAP website www.fvap.gov under toll-free Ombudsman Service.

g. August is "**Army Voter Registration Month.**" During this month, every Soldier and overseas civilian (to include NAF civilians and retirees overseas) will be given a Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) which will allow them to register to vote. Local commands may design an "event," within the limits of law and policy, to accomplish this activity.

B-5 Objectives

a. To provide voter information which will educate Soldiers and overseas DA civilians (to include NAF employees overseas), and their family members regarding the process they need to follow if they desire to register and vote.

b. To educate Soldiers, DA civilians overseas, and their family members on the mechanics of voting. See Misc Pub 360-02

c. To ensure that all Soldiers and overseas DA civilians have the opportunity to register and vote.

B-6. Concept

a. Through command information print and electronic media, all VAOs will support the command's efforts to educate Soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their family members about the systems that exist for them to register and vote, even when they are away from their home state.

b. The following guidance and communication ideas should be incorporated in command information programs:

(1) As stated in paragraph B-3a above, appeal to first term Soldiers who may be eligible to vote for the first time. Challenge them to educate themselves on the voting process and assist those who desire to do so with registering to vote.

(2) Spots/pictures could show NCOs teaching first term Soldiers the mechanics of absentee registration and voting.

c. The following "good ideas" should be communicated throughout the command to encourage voter participation among the target market Soldiers." **All programs should be reviewed by the servicing Staff Judge Advocate to ensure that the effort complies with law and policy.**

(1) Conduct an Oath Reaffirmation Ceremony, followed by registration opportunities.

(2) Set up colorful, patriotic voting displays in high traffic areas (chapels, housing areas, child care facilities, Officer and NCO Clubs, exchanges, clothing sales stores, welcome centers, commissaries, theaters, golf courses, bowling facilities, hobby shops, shopettes, etc.).

(3) Use unit organizational days, command picnics, and other important events unique to the command to publicize voter registration and request for ballots. Set up other Special Days to focus on registration and voting (suggest a day around the 4th of July and other appropriate holidays).

(4) Publicize Army Voter Registration Month by e-mail, flyers and posters. The flyers and posters could be placed in local banking facilities, Officer and NCO Clubs, NAF facilities, museums, Officers and NCO Wives Clubs, on-post theaters, exchanges, shopettes, gasoline stations, hobby and craft shops, gymnasiums, etc.

(5) Publicize letters from installation commanders or SVAOs to Soldiers regarding their opportunity and right to vote. Commanders must be cautious to ensure that their letter complies with the law and policies, especially the limits on commissioned officers influencing the voting of a member of the Armed Forces. The letter should be reviewed by their servicing Staff Judge Advocate prior to publication.

(6) Publicize the location of where FPCAs may be obtained for registration and for requesting a ballot. This publication should also include all unit voting assistance officers who are trained to assist in executing the FPCA.

The above suggestions are just some of the "good ideas" commanders may use to increase voter participation. Commanders and VAOs can use any patriotic theme that is in good taste and that complies with law and policy to reach the Army's target market.

Appendix C

Required Reports (2006-2007)

<u>SUSPENSE DATE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>REFERENCE PARA</u>
14 Apr 06	Listing of Installation SVAOs	Para 5b(3)
9 Jun 06	Monthly Status Report (May 06)	Para 5b(4)
14 Jul 06	Quarterly Update to Listing of Installation SVAOs & Monthly Status Report (Jun 06)	Paras 5b(3) & 5b(4)
11 Aug 06	Monthly Status Report (Jul 06)	Para 5b(4)
8 Sep 06	Monthly Status Report (Aug 06)	Para 5b(4)
6 Oct 06	Quarterly Update to Listing of Installation SVAOs & Monthly Status Report (Sep 06)	Paras 5b(3) & 5b(4)
Dec 06 or Jan 07	After Action Report	Para 7d(2)

NOTE: Additional reports may be required and instructions will be forwarded separately.